



Planning *the* Future

STRATEGIC PLAN ACCOMPLISHMENTS





STRATEGIC PLANNING GOALS

- GOAL 1:** TO CONSERVE AND ENHANCE FISH AND WILDLIFE POPULATIONS AND THEIR HABITATS.
- GOAL 2:** TO INCREASE OPPORTUNITY FOR, AND SAFE PARTICIPATION IN HUNTING, FISHING, TRAPPING, BOATING AND OTHER WILDLIFE-RELATED ACTIVITIES.
- GOAL 3:** TO FOSTER A MORE INFORMED AND INVOLVED PUBLIC.
- GOAL 4:** TO SECURE AMPLE, DEDICATED AND LONG-TERM FUNDING.
- GOAL 5:** TO CREATE A MORE DIVERSE, EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT ORGANIZATION.

Cover and facing photos by DAVE BAKER

Wild turkey in spring



THIS OVERVIEW OF accomplishments, activities and advances in wildlife-associated conservation and recreation represents just a portion of the work carried out by the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources. On many fronts, these activities are on-going and designed to provide state residents with continuous opportunities to benefit from well-managed wildlife and fisheries resources within the Commonwealth.

The millions of residents and non-residents who engage in wildlife associated recreation in the Bluegrass State, and who generate almost six billion dollars economic impact annually, exemplifies the importance Kentuckians place on the kind of work the agency conducts. It is the mission of the KDFWR to maintain, improve and perpetuate the state's game and nongame resources for the enjoyment of all its citizens today, tomorrow and beyond.

Economic Impact Data

Anglers, Hunters, Boaters, and other wildlife-related users

WILDLIFE-ASSOCIATED RECREATION IN KENTUCKY

ACTIVITY	PARTICIPANTS	TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT
Fishing	554,000	\$1.2 Billion
Hunting	347,000	\$1.5 Billion
Wildlife Watching	1,319,000	\$1.3 Billion
Boating	1,200,000	\$1.94 Billion
	3,420,000	\$5.94 Billion

Total Economic Impact
\$5.94 Billion

Administration

LICENSE SALES:

For the third year running, the agency experienced a record volume of license and permit sales, totaling 1.03 Million units.

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COMMISSIONER:

In May 2014, Gregory K. Johnson was appointed as Commissioner of the Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Department. He immediately initiated advances in employee training, and took steps to re-focus the agency on improved service and attention to the needs of sportsmen and women throughout the Commonwealth.



Dr. Karen Waldrop



Charles Bush



Steve Beam



Ron Brooks



Brian Blank



Tim Slone



David Bruce



Rodney Coffey



Billye Haslett

EXECUTIVE STAFF:

Joining Commissioner **Gregory Johnson** as the agency Executive Staff are Deputy Commissioners **Dr. Karen Waldrop** and **Charles Bush**, with Division Director's **Steve Beam** (Wildlife), **Ron Brooks** (Fisheries), **Brian Blank** (Marketing), **Tim Slone** (Information and Education), **David Bruce** (Engineering, Infrastructure and Technology), **Rodney Coffey** (Law Enforcement) and **Billye Haslett** (Administrative Services).

CONNECTING THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA:

The agency continues to grow social media impact, reaching 100,000 Facebook fans and building engagement in our Twitter accounts that provide timely information on programs from the Department, our Wildlife Education Center, and Fisheries Districts, respectively. One Facebook post reached more than 1.6 million people. We enjoy over 12,000 Followers on Twitter. The Public Affairs Division received a KAGC Award of Excellence in "Social Media" in 2015.



ENGAGING CONSTITUENTS:

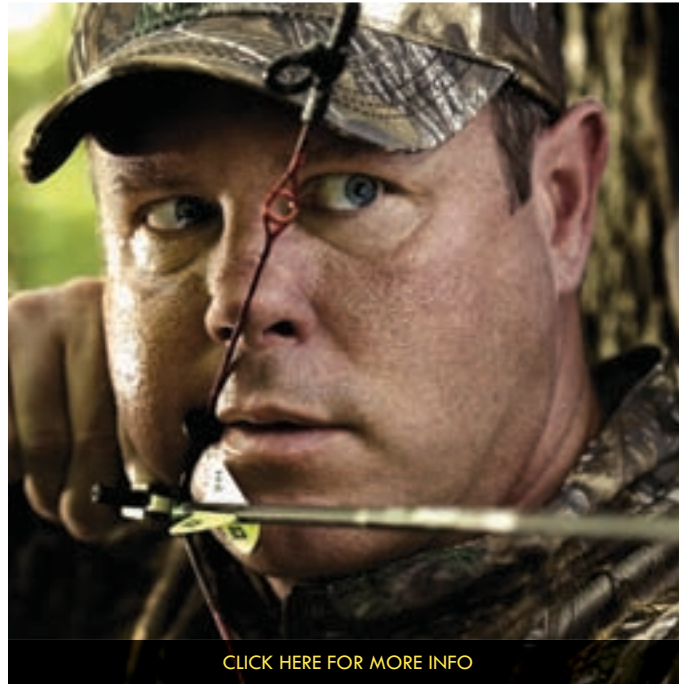
KDFWR exhibits in outdoor shows, ranging from regional boat shows in Louisville and Lexington to the Kentucky Deer and Turkey Expo to the Kentucky State Fair.



ELK SUCCESS:

Elk hunt applications totaled over 70,000. KDFWR was also honored in 2014 with the *RMEF Conservationist of the Year* award by the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation .

Information and Education



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KENTUCKY AFIELD TELEVISION:

The agency's Emmy award winning television show, Kentucky Afield continues to expand its popularity beyond the traditional air waves with nearly 25 million YouTube views. Chad Miles is the new host of the popular outdoors show and Nathan Brooks is its new Executive Producer. In all, the show's staff has won 14 Emmy's in the last 10 years.



BOW:

In 2015 and 2016, there was 384 participants that attended Becoming an Outdoors Woman (B.O.W) events. This is a workshop designed primarily for women to build confidence in outdoor skills that are relevant in hunting and fishing. Events are held over a course of a weekend or a one day event. Classes during these events range from Wild Game Cooking, Trapping Basics, Edible Wild Plants, and Advanced Fishing. Instructors are composed of volunteers and KDFWR staff.



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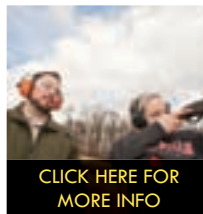
NATIONAL ARCHERY IN THE SCHOOLS PROGRAM (NASP):

The Kentucky Archery in the Schools program (the most successful in the nation) has more than 110,000 school children at 532 schools participating. The Kentucky State Championship Archery in the Schools Tournament recently set a new record with nearly 200 teams and more than 4,200 students competing.



CONSERVATION EDUCATION:

KDFWR Conservation Educators present programs to 70,000 4th, 5th, and 6th grade students at 639 different schools each month.



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HUNTER EDUCATION:

More than 15,000 people earn their hunter education certification cards each year in courses taught by the Hunter Education Program.



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SALATO WILDLIFE EDUCATION CENTER:

The Salato Wildlife Education Center is one of Frankfort's top attractions with more than 55,000 visitors each year. Kentucky's schools extensively use Salato for outdoor and science education.



FACILITIES:

Construction of a new dining hall at Camp Currie has been identified as an agency priority. Funding has been earmarked for the project and a consultant has been hired to help select a design.

CONSERVATION CAMPS:

Children attend the department's 3 residential summer camps. A special Venture Camp week has been added for 7th & 8th grade students. Venture Camp delivers advanced programs for children that have previously attended camp and exceed the age limit to attend traditional camps. Also, a special camp is held for Girls Inc. that focuses on girls and young women from challenging backgrounds.



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Fisheries


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CREATING STREAM HABITAT

The Kentucky Wetland & Stream Mitigation program (FIL/O) has over 170 miles of stream habitat mitigation projects with work completed statewide on over 100 miles since 2002. Highlights include projects on five trout streams such as Otter Creek, Trammel Fork, and Hatchery Creek. Recently, projects and lands were added to the Ed Mabry-Laurel Gorge WMA and Clay WMA, gaining over 800 acres for hunters and anglers for new opportunities on the waters of Laurel Creek in Elliott County or along streams and lands adjoining over one mile of the Licking River in Bath County. The recently completed Hatchery Creek in Russell County now boasts high numbers of large trout, including trophy size fish, that have moved into the stream from the Cumberland River, making it a destination for trout enthusiasts.


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RESOURCE IMPROVEMENTS

Aquatic nuisance species (ANS) pose a direct threat to Kentucky's waterways and as a result, threaten local tourism and water-related recreational activities. KDFWR is currently focusing on two invasives; Asian carp and the aquatic plant, hydrilla. On the Asian carp front, this Department continues to take a leadership role to compel states and the federal government to reach a level of effort and funding that will make the control of Asian carp in Kentucky and throughout the Mississippi River basin a reality. Recent efforts have led to KDFWR receiving over \$280,000 in federal funds to fight aquatic nuisance species in Kentucky. Improved communication between commercial fishermen and Asian carp processors as well as boater education on the spread and damage caused by hydrilla are top priorities.



EASY ACCESS:

The Fishing-in-Neighborhoods (FINs) Program includes 40 lakes, which influence 31% of those fishing in those waters to purchase a fishing license and enjoy the fishing experience. The Department releases more than 140,000 rainbow trout, 100,000 channel and blue catfish and 64,000 hybrid sunfish in FINs lakes each year.



EXPANDED OPPORTUNITIES

The Department is always looking to create expanded fishing opportunities across the state. Whether it be new fishing locations or another species to fish for, these opportunities are key to recruiting new anglers and keeping the old. Recent additions and opportunities just around the corner include the completion of Hatchery Creek in Russell County, acquisition of the Boone Tract WMA in Henry County and its 4 associated lakes and ponds, saugeye stockings in several state-owned lakes as well as Taylorsville Lake, muskie stockings at Dewey Lake, acquisition of the Rockcastle River WMA and its 14 associated ponds and expansion of the FINS program by five lakes.



RAISING QUALITY FISH:

Department hatcheries produce over 7 million fish annually, including 18 species and hybrids, while crews log over 140,000 miles across the state stocking fish in an abundance of waterways.


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FISH RESTORATION AND IMPROVEMENT

Along with producing over 7 million fish, including 18 species and hybrids, hatchery production also aims to restore historically significant species and improve existing sportfish populations. Restoration efforts are currently underway for the lake sturgeon in the upper Cumberland River drainage and the alligator gar in the western region of the state. These threatened or critically imperiled species are currently being raised at the Peter Pfeiffer Fish Hatchery and are stocked annually as part of a long-term restoration effort. In addition to restoring critical species, the Department is also attempting to improve trophy bass populations across the state through the Trophy Bass Propagation Program. This program, modeled after the Texas ShareLunker Program, utilizes angler donated trophy bass as broodstock in the statewide bass stocking program.


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RESTORING LAKE HABITAT

KDFWR recently created a Fish Habitat Section with the primary purpose of conducting large-scale fish habitat projects on reservoirs across Kentucky. These projects aim to place large amounts of structure across multiple reservoir locations and will require extensive coordination along with partner and volunteer efforts. Along with these large-scale projects, each of the seven fishery districts also conduct smaller-scale project at state-owned and managed lakes. These project will provide needed habitat for fish and also good fishing locations for anglers. Locations of all of the structure sites are provided to the public through the KDFWR website.

Wildlife



CONSERVATION:

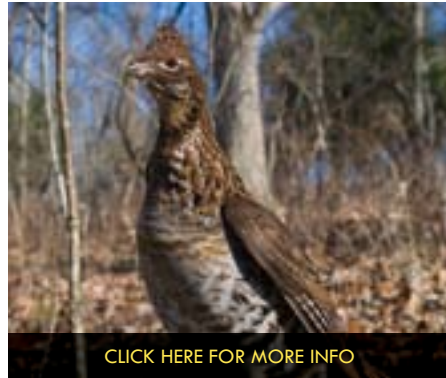
The agency is currently working on a partnership with Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation (RMEF) for funding of a forest management project. This project is intended to benefit species needing early successional habitat including grouse, deer, elk and other species of concern in eastern Kentucky.



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HUNTING EXPERIENCE:

Kentucky's free-ranging elk population is the nation's largest east of the Rocky Mountains and elk hunters have some of the highest harvest success rates in the country.



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GROUSE INITIATIVE:

A draft Grouse and Young Forest Strategic Plan has been developed in concert with three public meetings in Eastern Kentucky to gain further public input. The final plan will help guide the agency's forest management partnerships and habitat projects into the future.



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BEAR:

The agency recently embarked on a new phase of bear research in the mountains of Southeast Kentucky yielding the capture of 16 female bears which were fitted with radio collars. These radio collars will allow female bears to be tracked to their winter dens where researchers will examine cub production.



FOREST MANAGEMENT:

The agency has initiated a 55-acre timber harvest on the Fleming WMA to set back forest stand succession and create early successional habitat to benefit grouse and other wildlife species. Also, the department is developing a plan for an 1,800-acre focus area in Eastern Kentucky for forest habitat management work in coordination with the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation (RMEF) and other partners complementing the Ruffed Grouse and Young Forest Strategic Initiative.



ANIMAL HEALTH:

The agency has tested over 26,000 deer and elk statewide for chronic wasting disease since 2002. Over 1,000 deer and elk were tested in 2015 and surveillance efforts are ongoing. Also, the department initiated statewide surveillance for amphibian diseases, including the emerging salamander chytrid fungus which is wiping out salamanders in Europe. The first year sampling revealed the salamander chytrid fungus is not present in Kentucky.



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MIGRATORY BIRDS:

The agency implemented a new online system for the Harvest Information Program (HIP) to collect data for ducks, geese, doves and other migratory birds. This new system provides more accurate information to assist with setting hunting seasons and providing more hunting opportunities in the future.



QUAIL RESTORATION:

The agency hosted the first-ever Bobwhite Leadership Workshop at Shaker Village with nine state fish and wildlife agency executives meeting over 3 days to discuss the national movement to restore bobwhite. The Department and partners completed an over 700-acre prairie restoration at Perryville Battlefield State Park - the single largest planting in the Department's history. Also, the Bluegrass Army Depot hosted its first bobwhite hunt in nearly a decade.

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MOLLUSK CONSERVATION:

KDFWR's Center for Mollusk Conservation was awarded \$400,000 to support a regional effort to increase mussel populations by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Along with partners Thomas More College, Tennessee Wildlife Resource Agency, Ohio Division of Natural Resources and West Virginia Division of Natural Resources, KDFWR can accomplish much to prevent extinction of federally-endangered species in multiple states.



BARN OWL:

The agency conducted a statewide barn owl nesting inventory and have documented more nests for the rare species in the Bluegrass State than in any previous survey.



LAND ACQUISITION:

The agency recently completed 8 land projects making 7,601 more acres available to sportsmen and women for hunting, fishing and wildlife-related outdoor recreation.

Law Enforcement



HONORING THE FALLEN:

A memorial erected in 2014 by the Kentucky Conservation Officers Association on the KDFWR headquarter grounds honors conservation officers that gave their lives in the line of duty.

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TRAINING:

The Division now has an in-house training section for conservation officer in-service training, statute and regulation updates, and proficiency training.



A "Boat Safe Kentucky" app is available for use by smart phone users. Among the safety information on the app is a safety equipment check list, a float plan, and information showing the nearest marina to a user's location.



PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION:

All Conservation Officers wear body cameras while on patrol.

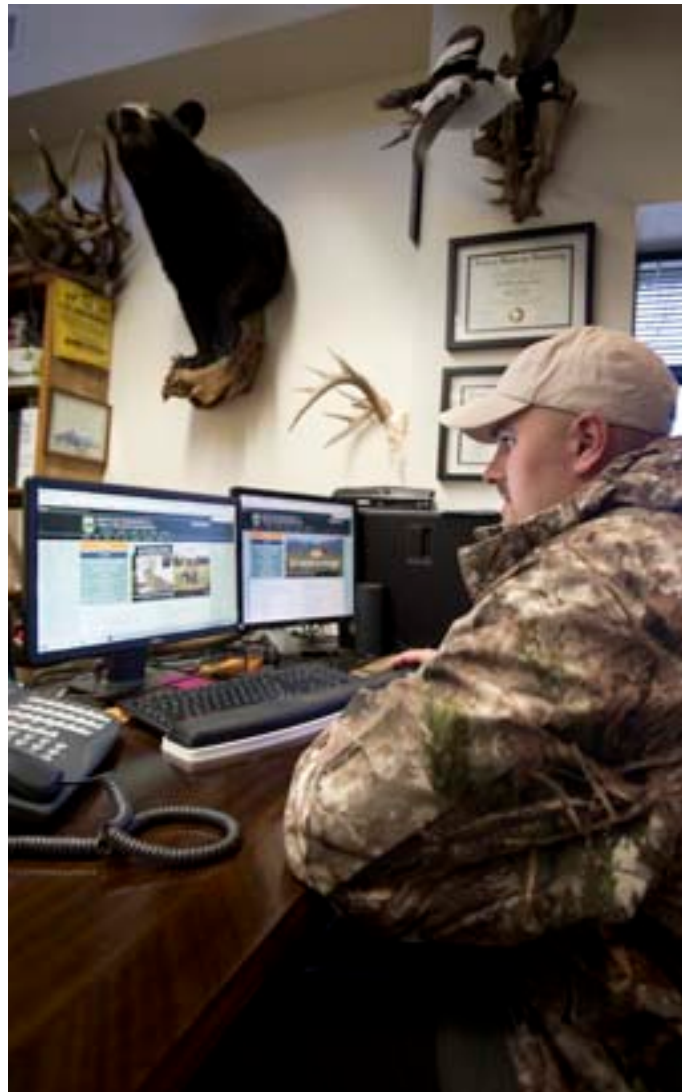


PARTNERING FOR THE FUTURE:

Conservation officers partner and assist with many fishing and hunting related events for youth across the Commonwealth. Some of those include the Special Fishing Olympics in Campbell County, Dad's Day Out at Carr Creek Lake in the Seventh District and the Anderson County Youth Turkey Hunt sponsored by the Anderson County Sportsman's Club.

Officers assist with the Annual Catch-a-Rainbow fishing derby at Wolf Creek National Hatchery that attract 3,000 people, conduct many school-related and sportsman's clubs programs, the Becoming an Outdoors-Woman Program and support local tourism efforts in their communities.

Engineering, Infrastructure and Technology



INFRASTRUCTURE AND LICENSING:

KDFWR EIT Division is responsible for infrastructure improvements/maintenance as well as ramp and fishing access projects across the state. EIT also develops and maintains all IT applications for the agency and maintains and support a statewide licensing system and over 800 license agents.



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MISSION STATEMENT

To conserve and enhance fish and wildlife resources and provide opportunity for hunting, fishing, trapping, boating and other wildlife related activities.